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**DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**

**National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

**50 CFR Part 648**

**[Docket No. 140117052-4402-02]**

**RIN 0648-XE113**

**Fisheries of the Northeastern United States; Atlantic Bluefish Fishery; Quota Transfer**

**AGENCY:** National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Commerce.

**ACTION:** Temporary rule; quota transfer.

**SUMMARY:** NMFS announces that the State of Maine is transferring a portion of its 2015 commercial Atlantic bluefish quota to the State of Rhode Island. These quota adjustments are necessary to comply with the Bluefish Fishery Management Plan quota transfer provision. This announcement informs the public of the revised commercial quota for each state involved.

**DATES:** Effective [*Insert date of filing for public inspection at the Office of the Federal Register*], through December 31, 2015.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Reid Lichwell, Fishery Management Specialist, (978)-281-9112.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

Regulations governing the bluefish fishery are found at 50 CFR part 648. The regulations

require annual specification of a commercial quota that is apportioned among the coastal states from Florida through Maine. The process to set the annual commercial quota and the percent allocated to each state are described in § 648.162.

The final rule implementing Amendment 1 to the Bluefish Fishery Management Plan published in the **Federal Register** on July 26, 2000 (65 FR 45844), and provided a mechanism for transferring bluefish quota from one state to another. Two or more states, under mutual agreement and with the concurrence of the Administrator, Greater Atlantic Region, NMFS (Regional Administrator), can transfer or combine bluefish commercial quota under § 648.162(e). The Regional Administrator is required to consider the criteria in § 648.162(e)(1) in the evaluation of requests for quota transfers or combinations.

Maine has agreed to transfer 30,000 lb (13,608 kg) of its 2015 commercial quota to Rhode Island. This transfer was prompted by state officials in Rhode Island to ensure the state's commercial bluefish quota is not exceeded. The Regional Administrator has determined that the criteria set forth in § 648.162(e)(1) are met. The revised bluefish quotas for calendar year 2015 are: Maine, 5,037 lb (2,284 kg); and Rhode Island, 536,826 lb (243,500 kg), based on the final 2015 Atlantic Bluefish Specifications (80 FR 46848; August 6, 2015).

### **Classification**

This action is taken under 50 CFR part 648 and is exempt from review under Executive Order 12866.

**Authority:** 16 U.S.C. 1801 *et seq.*

Dated: September 17, 2015

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Alan D. Risenhoover,

Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries,

National Marine Fisheries Service.

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